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Executive Registry

JUL 1958

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence**VIA: Deputy Director (Plans)****SUBJECT: Efforts to Obtain Release of [redacted] Americans in Jail in Communist China**

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1. This memorandum contains a recommendation for the Director to take action. The recommendation occurs in paragraph 5 below.

2. Since the visit of Mrs. Mary V. Downey and her son William, Mrs. Jessie Fecteau, [redacted] to Communist China in January of this year, and the visit of Mrs. Downey, William Downey, [redacted] to the Director's office on 17 February, we have been in constant touch with the Office of China Affairs of the Department of State on the problem of obtaining the release of the four Americans remaining in prison in Communist China: John T. Downey, Richard G. Fecteau, [redacted]

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[redacted] From time to time we have made suggestions to State on ways of obtaining the release. Some of the suggestions have come from the mothers. You will recall the idea of asking the Russians for help. The Department of State, for the most part, however, has not been able to see its way to acting on the suggestions, for several reasons -- policy for one, the interruption in the ambassadorial talks at Geneva for another.

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3. We are, therefore, pleased with the intention of State to take up with General Gruenther of the American Red Cross the idea of using the American Red Cross in an attempt to obtain the release of the four Americans. We think the idea is a good one.

4. We believe also that State should be encouraged, in the resumption of the ambassadorial talks in Warsaw, to relate the resumption or continuation of the talks to the release of the four Americans and to indicate to the Chinese Communist representative that the talks cannot be expected to continue indefinitely unless release of the prisoners provides the United States with assurance of Chinese Communist good faith. If such an indication of good faith is provided, the United States would then feel justified in continuing

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the talks. By thus bringing pressure upon the Chinese Communists to release the Americans, we would hope to influence the Chinese Communists into turning to the Red Cross channel as a way of making the release without losing face officially at Warsaw. We believe, further, that this encouragement to State should be expressed by this agency at the highest level possible, and that at the same time the agency should express to State its deep concern with effecting the release of the four agency-connected Americans and its readiness to help State in any way possible.

5. It is recommended that the Director appoint an agency representative to express to State the ideas set forth in the above paragraphs.

Signed William V. Briggs

Acting Chief, Far East Division

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CONCUR:

(SIGNED) JOHN A. FISHER
Deputy Director (Plans)

Date

CPG
DDC
7/25/58

The recommendation contained in paragraph 5 is approved:

Director of Central Intelligence

Date

cc: DDCI

Orig ret'd to AC/76 w/ note on heelslip:
Per our 'phone conversation, DDC says to go ahead
& push this with State Dept. as hard as you can.
He has sent a letter to Senator Bush saying we will
follow this up with State. J.M.C.

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